

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1811

ANSWERED ON:12.03.2008

STATUS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Singh Deo Smt. Sangeeta Kumari;Thummar Shri Virjibhai

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) the level of Human Development Index of the country;
- (b) the chief characteristics of the report received in this regard;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to improve the Human Development Index; and
- (c) the success achieved by the Government as a result thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN)

(a): As per Human Development Report 2007/2008 released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2007, India's value of Human Development Index (HDI) is 0.619 in 2005.

(b): The Human Development Report 2007/2008 notes the warming of the climate system, linking it directly to human activity. According to the Report, climate change is the defining human development challenge of the 21st Century. Failure to respond to that challenge will stall and then reverse international efforts to reduce poverty. The poorest countries and populations will suffer the earliest and most damaging setbacks, even though they have contributed least to the problem. Looking to the future, no country – however wealthy or powerful – will be immune to the impact of climate change. The Report mentions that there is now overwhelming scientific evidence that the world is moving towards the point at which irreversible ecological catastrophe becomes unavoidable. Increased exposure to droughts, floods and storms is already destroying opportunities and reinforcing inequalities. It is the poor who are bearing the brunt of climate change. The Report states that there is a window of opportunity for avoiding the most damaging climate change impacts, but that window is closing. The world has less than a decade to change the course. Actions taken – or not taken – in the years ahead will have a profound bearing on the future course of human development. The Report argues for initiating measures for deep and early cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.

(c): India's development strategy recognises human development as of paramount importance. The growth of the economy no doubt caters to this aspect. The objective of growth along with inclusive development adopted in the Eleventh Five Year Plan is to usher in an era of greater well-being of the people of the country. The Government in the recent years has launched a number of programmes for Social Sector development. This includes National Rural Health Mission, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, Bharat Nirman, etc. In addition, some programmes specifically for the welfare of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, elderly, etc. is being implemented. All these programmes are meant to raise the level of income, particularly of the poor and the underprivileged, as well as ensuring greater human development. Further, governance has been considered as a key component for attainment of growth and poverty reduction objectives. Improved people's participation especially through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) and Urban Local Bodies, involvement of NGOs and Civil Society Organisations as development partners, enactment of Right to Information Act, reforms for improving transparency, accountability and efficiency, effective monitoring of public expenditure to prevent leakages, judicial reforms and use of information technology are recognized as integral elements for a good governance structure. Emphasis is also laid on inclusion and involvement of the poor in the design and implementation of programmes and building their organization capacity through social mobilization in order to make them active partners in the growth process.

(d): The value of HDI for India, as estimated by the UNDP using a consistent methodology and on comparable trend data, is observed to increase in a secular fashion since 1990. HDI for India as estimated by the UNDP is observed to increase from 0.521 in 1990 to 0.551 in 1995, 0.578 in 2000 and further to 0.619 in 2005.